



## LIBRARY OF HEAVEN'S PATH

### C617: First Flaw



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"What?"

"He said that Apothecary Luo's actions cannot be considered pill forging?"

"This is way too much! Apothecary Luo is a 5-star apothecary from the headquarters. Everyone here can see that her forging technique and movements were flawless, and yet, someone actually dares to insult her pill forging? Who is that insolent fellow?"

"Audacious!"

It was as if someone had set gasoline on fire. Wrathful eyes immediately turned in the direction from where the voice came from.

And following which, they saw a young man in his twenties wearing a 3-star apothecary emblem on his chest.

"A mere 3-star apothecary actually dares to utter such nonsense?"

"Ignorant brat!"

Upon seeing the other party's appearance, many among the crowd sneered, and some even bellowed angrily.

Apothecary Luo might be young, but her understanding of pills and pill forging technique were above most of them here.

Her succinct and precise movements in her pill forging were a pleasure to the eyes. If a pill forging of such level couldn't even be considered as pill forging, what else could?

Besides, even if someone wanted to criticize her, one should at least be a 5-star apothecary. Can a 3-star apothecary like you even understand what has just happened? How dare you speak such arrogant words?

Apothecary Luo also frowned.

What she wanted to hear was a feedback, not an insult.

"The apothecary over there, may I know what mistakes there are in my pill forging for you to utter such words?"

"You want to know?" The young man raised his eyelids.

"Of course!" Apothecary Luo replied.

"There were a total of 127 mistakes in your pill forging just now. I fear that if I were to say them all... your confidence might be shattered, and you would find yourself unable to forge any pill from now on!" the young man said impassively.

"127 mistakes?"

Harrumphing coldly, Apothecary Luo flung her sleeves and said, "If you can really list out that many, even if I were to have my confidence shattered, it will be only due to my lack of expertise!"

Initially, she thought that the other party might have noticed some major flaws in her pill forging. But upon hearing such words, she immediately denied that possibility.

Her pill forging technique had been refined by the countless predecessors of Hongyuan Master Teacher Academy, forming a nearly perfect art. If there was a mistake or two, she would still be able to acknowledge it. But more than a hundred...

You must be pulling my leg!

With so many mistakes, putting aside whether it is possible to form a pill, it is more likely that the cauldron would explode even before the fire is lit!

Even if one wanted to boast, there should be a limit! Beyond that, one would just be a shameless fool!

"Are you certain that you want to listen to them?"

A slight smile crept onto the young man's face.

"That's right!" Apothecary Luo replied.

"Sigh! Since you wish to know, if I were to continue remaining silent, you all would only think that I'm doing this intentionally to cause trouble!"

Shaking his head, the young man stood up and walked onto the stage. He first placed his hand on the cauldron beside the young lady before walking around it. After which, he turned to her and said, "Before that, I would like to ask you if you know of the background of this cauldron."

"Knowing the background of one's cauldron is the very basics of an apothecary. Of course, I at least know of the background of my own cauldron!"

Apothecary Luo knitted her eyebrows slightly in displeasure. "This cauldron was crafted by 5-star Blacksmith Wu Feng, and it took him a total of twelve years to finish its crafting. It's made by an alloy of the Frigid Metal found at the bottom of an ocean and Blue Coppersilver, thus making it resistant to high heat and extreme cold. It is a Spirit intermediate-tier pinnacle artifact..."

Hearing the young lady's flawless explanation, the young man continued, "Correct! But do you know that this cauldron has once suffered an explosion?"

Naturally, that young man was Zhang Xuan.

To convince the other party to willingly obey his instructions in the forging of the medicinal solution, he would have to impress her first to establish his credibility.

He was contemplating how he could do so when the other party expressed that she was seeking the opinions or advice of others. Since that was the case, there was no reason for him not to grasp this opportunity.

While Zhang Xuan's understanding of pill forging hadn't reached 5-star yet, he was still able to see through the other party's flaws through the Library of Heaven's Path.

Apothecary Luo froze for a moment before replying.

"I do. It has suffered an explosion before, but the ingredients only ended up being charred black. The cauldron suffered no damage from the incident, and there are no cracks either. As such, it shouldn't affect any subsequent pill forging!"

This cauldron was given to her by an elder of her family, and she had used it for three whole years. It did suffer from an explosion once, but... she should be the only one aware of it. How did the other party learn of it?

"You're right that the cauldron didn't suffer any damage!" Zhang Xuan touched the surface of the cauldron with his finger. "There are indeed no cracks. But based on the slightly gray tint on the opening of the cauldron and the slight scent of metallic rust, if I'm not mistaken, you were forging [Searing Flame Pill], a grade-5 pill!"

"Indeed!" Apothecary Luo's frown deepened as she nodded her head.

The previous explosion indeed happened in the midst of the forging of a Searing Flame Pill. Even though she wasn't the one forging it, she was present then and knew of the condition.

But to be able to know what was being forged during the explosion just by looking at the color of the cauldron and the scent of it, this young man's eye of discernment was way too formidable!

If she had thought that this fellow was making up lies to attract the attention of others a moment ago, at this moment, she was already thinking that he might possess true capability.

"An explosion really occurred before?"

"To be able to tell this much just by taking a look, even 6-star apothecaries aren't capable of such!"

"Indeed. This fellow might actually not be lying..."

The crowd below was astounded to hear Apothecary Luo acknowledge the young man's words.

Checking a cauldron's background and condition was something all apothecaries had to do... But still, to be able to infer so much just by taking a brief look, wasn't this young man's eye of discernment a little, no, way too incredible?

Even a typical 6-star apothecary would find it hard to deduce this much.

Previously, everyone, just like Apothecary Luo, thought that this fellow was just trying to stir some trouble. But after hearing his analysis, they realized that they might be sorely mistaken.

"But so what if the Searing Flame Pill was being forged during the explosion? Does that make any difference?" Apothecary Luo asked.

As a pill rich in yang energy, it was normal for an explosion to occur. There shouldn't be any problem with it.

"Of course, there is a difference!"

Zhang Xuan shook his head. "If you were to continue forging Searing Flame Pill with this cauldron, then yes, it wouldn't have made a difference. However, you chose to forge the Spirit Revitalization Pill instead! The Spirit Revitalization Pill can calm one's nerves and nourish one's soul energy, thus making it a particularly valuable pill. The greatest taboo of this pill is to introduce any possible 'violent attributes' into it. And yet, you used a cauldron that a Searing Flame Pill once exploded in to forge it. Did you think that it wouldn't have any influence on the Spirit Revitalization Pill?"

"This..." Apothecary Luo fell silent.

Pills forged for the soul required the forging to be done under more stringent conditions, just that... even if a past explosion could have any influence on a pill, it should be minimal.

"Are you thinking that the effects it would have on the Spirit Revitalization Pill, if any in the first place, would be minimal?"

Seemingly having seen through the other party's thoughts, Zhang Xuan's lips curled up. "You would be right if it was an ordinary forging process. However, there's a mistake in your forging process that exacerbates this effect. I remember hearing you say that if the Emerald Jade Grass is placed directly in the cauldron, it would cause a conflict with the Wooden Cypress Flower. As such, it has to be soaked in Hamachi Extract beforehand. Am I right?"

"Yes!" Apothecary Luo nodded her head.

She had indeed said such words, and this was part of her forging process as well.

"The Emerald Jade Grass has a violent nature whereas the Wooden Cypress Flower has a gentle nature. Indeed, there would be a collision between the both of them, and using Hamachi Extract is a viable way to mediate between the both of the medicinal herbs. However... have you thought about what would happen if Hamachi Extract comes into contact with the main ingredient of the Searing Flame Pill, Blue-stemmed Wood?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"It would cause a violent reaction. However, it has been years since the Searing Flame Pill was forged, and in the interval since then, the cauldron has been used to forge many different pills as well. Even if remnants of the Searing Flame Pill still remain, it should be minimal, right?" Apothecary Luo replied.

Blue-stemmed Wood would indeed react violently with Hamachi Extract; they are just like fire and water, incapable of coexisting simultaneously in the same location. However... it had been years since the explosion, so even if a reaction occurred, it shouldn't amount to much.



"Minimal?" Zhang Xuan shook his head. He turned to the old man on the stage whom he suspected before to be the guild leader and asked, "This apothecary over here, may I trouble you with something?"

"Feel free to speak!" the elder replied.

"May I trouble you to scrape a layer of this gray tint on the cover of the cauldron?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"Alright!" Even though the old man had no idea what he was up to, he still took out a dagger, scraped off a layer of the gray tint, and placed it in a jade bowl.

"Do you have any Hamachi Extract with you? May I ask of you to pour some onto the gray scrapings?" Without touching the jade bowl, Zhang Xuan asked.

"Un!"

Nodding his head, the old man issued some instructions to an apothecary beside him, and the latter immediately rushed out. Soon, he returned with a calabash and poured a light-blue solution into the jade bowl.

Tzzzzzzzz!

As the solution came into contact with the gray scrapings, intense effervescence reminiscent to that of boiling water immediately occurred.

"This..."

Everyone was astonished.

No matter how dull-witted one could be, it was clear that this was a violent reaction.

Should this be subjected under the intense conditions within the cauldron, there was a high chance that an explosion would occur, thus reducing the medicinal herbs inside into mere dredges.

"How could this be?"

Shocked, Apothecary Luo's face paled.

Clearly, she couldn't believe what she was seeing to be true.

"An explosion in the midst of the forging of a Searing Flame Pill is indeed nothing, but you forgot about the strong adhesive property of its main ingredient, Blue-stemmed Wood. After the explosion, the Blue-stemmed Wood stuck onto the walls of the cauldron, and it is difficult to cleanse it using ordinary methods. While it wouldn't pose any problem in the forging of other pills, it might result in serious problems when Hamachi Extract is involved in the forging process," Zhang Xuan said.

"Is there any way to solve this issue?" Apothecary Luo asked.

"Of course, there is! Corrosive Lotus is capable of neutralizing Blue-stemmed Wood. If you add two liang of Corrosive Lotus before the forging of the Spirit Revitalization Pill, you will be able to clear away the remaining Blue-stemmed Wood easily. At the same time, it will also lower the temperature of the cauldron...

(1 liang is about ~37.8g)

"As such, you won't have to soak the Wood Incense Flower with Violet Flora Water and bask it under the sun for five days, thus sparing you of this troublesome preparation

process," Zhang Xuan said.

"This..."

Apothecary Luo was rendered speechless.

As a 5-star apothecary, she was familiar with medicinal properties and could easily deduce the authenticity of the other party's words. After careful analysis, she realized that the suggestions the other party offered were feasible and flawless, and it even boosted the efficiency of the forging process.

"While there are standard steps in pill forging, one mustn't follow them blindly. It's similar to driving a carriage; while there are rules and a standard set of skills involved, one's driving method must still alter according to the condition of the road!

"On top of noting the steps, one must also assess the condition of one's own cauldron and environment and make suitable changes. Otherwise, even if one were to follow the pill formula perfectly down to the minute details, one might still find oneself stuck in a deadlock!"

With his hands behind his back, Zhang Xuan turned to look at Apothecary Luo with an aloof expression. At this moment, he seemed as though a highly-esteemed, high-rank apothecary.

"This is... the first flaw I am pointing out to you!"

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